

ISSUE - 11

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Cover by George Forster.

Ah well, it's all for the best and the progressive World.  
There's plenty of diversion in ALBION to take your mind off it.

DON MILLER TALKS ABOUT MILLER'S RULE.

I have extracted the following from a letter I received from Don, dated December 16th.

"Reference ALBION nos. 5-7 - fine job as usual. It's too bad the run of DIPLOMANIAS never reached you; the contents of issue 14/15, in particular the 16-page dissertation on the Rules of Diplomacy, would have been most useful to you in your series of articles on Rule disputes.

I'd like to make a couple of corrections on your article in issue 5, concerning Miller's Rule. The original rule, changed just recently in the new House Rules published in DIPLOMANIA 26, was: 'Under no circumstances may support be given by a unit which is dislodged.' The revised rule is: 'A unit which is dislodged may have NO effect on the province from which the attack came.' The latter rule incorporates Koning's rule, the old Miller's rule, Turner's extension and the various Wells' extensions into one simple, easy-to-understand rule. Miller's rule is NOT, as you stated in ALBION 5: 'Under no circumstances may a displaced unit have any effect on the orders given to other units.' This is important. Miller's rule still allows a displaced unit to cut support (in other words, does not sanction the 'cutting of the cutting of support'). Also, a displaced unit could still stand off a unit trying to enter a province other than the province from which the attack which displaced the unit came. Miller's rule ONLY concerns the effect of the displaced unit upon the province from which the attack came."

\*\* My apologies for this error. Luckily the ALBION house-rules don't make the same error - Miller's rule is there quoted in the 'old' version which Don gives above, and Koning's rule etc. are also included in the house rules elsewhere. My thanks to you, Don, for putting me straight on this and for the clarification. Oh yes - and thanks for the nice comments about ALBION - these are things we never fail to print..... djt\*\*

"You enquired in issue 6 about the origin of Hyperspace Diplomacy. The rules were originally published in DIPLOMANIA 16/17. The rules were written by me, based upon an idea and a rough set of rules sent in by Dan Alderson. Since then, there have been several different versions of the rules written and games started employing them by Buddy Tretick. He and I are currently the only persons running any games in the 'Hyperspace' family. I might add that the Hyperspace idea is also employed in the Foundation Game (SCC) in HYDROPHOBIA."

\*\* The Foundation Game is a Diplomacy variant, based on the series of novels by Isaac Asimov - Foundation, Foundation and Empire, Second Foundation. djt\*\*

"The rules for Buddy's and my games differ from yours, however, mainly with respect to the fact that our Links and Separations are permanent (or until removed by an opposite order), and do not last only one season, as do yours. (The one-season rule was unique to game SCC). There are also other differences,

which you will note when DIPLOMANIA 16/17 arrives.

My comments on ALBION 5 re Miller's rule also apply to 6, in that Koning's rule and the Wells and Turner extensions are now subsumed in the revised Miller's rule.

Ref. the discussion on Brannan's rule in issue 7, I have some very definite opinions on same. My case was stated pretty plainly in DIPLOMANIA 14/15, and at great length - I'll leave you to extract anything you feel might be useful when the 'zine arrives. I also intend some more comments in DIPLOMANIA 27/28; there are some new ideas on the subject. I may also include some comments on your ALBION article in 27/28, after I have had time to give it more study. Suffice it for now for me to say that this is a VERY complex and thorny subject, which, when carried out to its logical lengths, involves some very basic disputes about the rules in general. There are so many related questions swirling around that I could write 20 pages on the subject and still only be scratching the surface. So I'll spare you for the moment....."

\*\* The poor ALBION editor, who thought he knew a fair amount about the rules by now, cowers back at the thought of getting yet more things wrong. The series on rule disputes was started in these pages in order to convey information to the semi-novice Diplomacy players in Britain; yet every issue there seem to be more complications to think about. The Diplomacy rules apparently resemble to untutored eyes the proverbial iceberg. Anyway, if anyone can put us right, it is Don Miller, and I look forward to his article with much interest. Clearly any information which concerns previous discussion in these pages will be printed in a future ALBION, so that readers may see for themselves the extent of the ignorance of the editor. As if you didn't know already. djt \*\*

JOHN MCCALLUM ABOUT THE VICTORY CRITERION.

The following extracts are from a letter I had from John, dated December 14th.

"ALBION no. 9 arrived yesterday. An excellent issue, as usual. ALBION is one zine that it is always a pleasure to read.

In the issue you mention that you will publish the BROB feature on the Victory Criterion in an upcoming issue. I think it might be well to point out that there is, perhaps, a little more to be said on the issue than was included in the BROB item on it. There are really quite a few shades of interpretation.

1. 18 forces being required to win. This position is unequivocal and it is becoming more widely adopted increasingly since the time that the BROB item appeared a year and a half ago. This is the criterion that I now use."

\*\* And so does ALBION! For once we have managed to agree on a rule without my merely extracting it from someone else's house rules..... djt\*\*

"2. 18 centres required to win. WILD 'N' WOOLY used this criterion for a long time though it has now changed it. A completed game shows the difficulty with this position. The game was 1966AA played in GRAUSTARK. In 1912 Germany, played by Jim Latimer, had 18 centres. However, his home centres were occupied and he was at that time only able to build 15 forces. Rod Walker, playing Austria, had 11 centres at that time, and the two Teutonic Powers were of course at war. England, Russia and Turkey survived with a force of 2 each. The game continued for two more years during which the three minor survivors were wiped out. Germany succeeded in freeing home centres sufficiently to get 2 of the 3 builds that he was entitled to, but one of these forces was promptly annihilated again. The final position was that each survivor had 16 forces. Germany had the two additional centres but had to keep all his home centres filled in order not to lose them, and consequently could never build. The game was declared a draw when both players were convinced that further advance was impossible. Under the old WILD 'N' WOOLY procedure this game would have been declared a win, rather than a draw, some 2+ playing years before the actual ending. I am convinced that the decision made in this game was the right one.

3. Followers of the rulebook statement of 'majority' of pieces on the board. In this version if one power has 17 and if his opponent(s) have 17, and if one of the latter is annihilated, then the player wins with 17 forces. Of course, under appropriate circumstances he can win with even less than 17. Boardman in GRAUSTARK follows this procedure, as do a number of others. There are some distinctions within the group, however:-

- a.) A majority at any time. I.e. if the absolute majority occurs at any time in play the win occurs. Terry Kuch is, I believe, the outstanding gamesmaster who uses this.
- b.) A majority only after a major move, i.e. Spring or Fall completed.
- c.) As above, but in the case of it occurring on the Fall move one must wait until the build season is over to decide whether the absolute majority exists or not. Thus an annihilation on the Fall move, leaving a player with 17 opposed to 16 by the rest of the board would not be a win if the owner of the annihilated force was entitled to a build to restore the 17-17 position.

\*\*Or, I imagine, John, if the new owner of the annihilated country's supply centre was any player other than the one who originally had the 17. Correct? djt\*\*

4. Finally, there is Charles Reinsel who declares a win if either a majority or 18 centres is reached. This is the 'weakest' of all victory criteria as it allows a win with 18 centres not buildable for, as WILD 'N' WOOLY used to do, and it allows a win with a less-than-18 majority.

In case you are wondering, I now use the 18 forces criterion. As so often the game that Calhamer felt in his bones is better

than the one that found its way into the rules as written. In fact my quarrel with the 18-force rule is that it isn't strict enough. In fact it is easy to find positions, and positions which plausibly have been expected to arise in a natural way, where, in a confrontation of a power with 18 forces and another with 16, the weaker power would have the positional advantage. A chess player does not normally resign when he is one pawn down. There are cases when he should resign when he is one pawn up. I would like to see a victory criterion of about 20 forces. It would have the bad feature, however, of producing more draws than occur at present. If you think that any of this would add to your discussion on the V.C. (hadn't noticed the coincidence here before) that you intend to publish in ALBION please feel free to use it."

\*\*As you have noticed, John's letter arrived too late for inclusion in the victory criterion discussion last time. However I am very grateful to him for the above clarification of the alternatives that have been tried. I would still be interested in finding out just how many games, of those already completed, would have had different results had they been judged under different criteria. John cites an example above of a game which, had it appeared in a different magazine, would have been judged differently, and presumably have appeared in the game ratings with the different result. How many games are there, I wonder, which have been included in the rating systems, and which would have had different results if printed in a different magazine? In my naive way I suspect the number is quite small - in other words I think the outcome of a game and the determination of a winner is likely to be arguable only in a small minority of cases. Experienced players in the U.S.A. and particularly those who, like John, have collected a most comprehensive library of Diplomacy magazines, will be able to put me straight on this point. I hope someone has this sort of information available; if they haven't already started to compile this information, though (I hope the keepers of the ratings have investigated it, for interest), it will be quite a job to comb through the 80-odd completed games in search of such data. I would be grateful for an indication on this matter, however, if anyone has the information available. djt\*\*

More letters, on these as well as other subjects, will be printed later in the issue. As you will have gathered, I am preparing issue 11 well in advance, in anticipation of the large amount of information I think it will contain.

AND NOW - ANOTHER ALBION FIRST! We have printed variant rules in these pages before (once), these being the ALBION Hyperspace rules. As Don Miller has already mentioned, these differ in a number of respects from the rules of established gamee, and hence might well be labelled a poor imitation. This cannot be said for the following, in any respect.

ABSTRACTION.    (ABERRATION V).    A Diplomacy Variant.

Rules created by Fred C. Davis Jnr., being a further modification of ABERRATION I. The rules for the latter were also created by Fred, with additions by Rod Walker.

These rules are reprinted herein by kind permission of the author.

1. All standard rules of Diplomacy will be followed, except as noted below. This includes the Rod Walker P.B.M. House Rules, unless otherwise specified.

2. There are 45 Supply Centres. Several additional provinces have been added, including the entire southern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. Most Great Powers have 8 provinces; Austria has 9, Russia 10. Most Great Powers will begin the game with 4 units on the board. Russia begins with 5 units. (See the map for the additional land and sea provinces added, and other name changes). Note that Switzerland is passable.

3. The Great Powers will begin the game with the following additional units (or units changed in type), in addition to the units and locations provided for under standard Diplomacy rules.

AUSTRIA:    A Pecs, F Zara (there is no province Trieste).  
ENGLAND:    F Plymouth.  
FRANCE:    A Lyon, F Marseilles (instead of A Marseilles).  
GERMANY:    A Dresden.  
ITALY:    F Sicily.  
RUSSIA:    A Arkhangel'sk, F Odessa (there is no Sevastopol).  
TURKEY:    F Damascus, F Sinope (there is no Ankara).

4. The first move of the game is July 1914, and each subsequent move will take place during a single month. The 'Build' seasons will be September, December, March and June. The game automatically ends following the November 1918 moves, except that the December 1918 builds will be allowed, if there are any to be made.

5. If any player has 23 or more units on the board prior to November 1918, he is automatically the winner (i.e. he meets the Victory Criterion). If no player has 23 units after the December 1918 builds, the player with the largest number of units (NOT supply centres) on the board is the winner.

6. Convoy by standard Diplomacy 'leap-frog' method is allowed only if it covers the crossing of a single sea province. A Fleet may convoy an Army belonging to its own country or to any other country. This one-space convoy will be referred to as the 'fast ferry', and the order for its use should be written under that heading.

7. All convoys involving the crossing of more than one sea space may only be undertaken by 'piggy-back'. On a given move, an Army in a coastal province adjacent to a Fleet may be placed aboard the Fleet, the combination becoming an A/F. The A/F may then move to another sea space, and may then also disembark the Army, if the second sea space touches another land province.

I.e. 'A Marseilles to F Gulf of Lions; A/F Gulf of Lions to Western Med; A disembarked Algeria.'

An A/F can remain physically intact on the board for three consecutive moves, excluding build periods. Thus, an Army can be on the sea for a total of 4 consecutive A/F moves before exhausting its rations, with build periods not counted as moves. If the Army is not successfully disembarked before the end of the fourth move, it is annihilated. E.g. an Army which boards a Fleet in October 1914 could stay with the Fleet for October, November and January, but must be landed before the end of February 1915, or it will be removed from the board. Removal of the Army will not affect the existence of the Fleet.

8. Army/Fleet combined Operations.

a. An A/F has the same combat factor as a single fleet. It may attack, support and be supported. It cannot convoy another Army by the fast ferry, since its transports are already fully loaded. An A/F can exist only in a sea province. It cannot be ordered to a land province as an entity.

b. If an Army is ordered to board a Fleet, and the A/F is prevented from moving to another sea space, the A/F remains intact. If the Fleet order is 'Hold', the A/F will also remain intact.

c. If an Army is ordered to board a Fleet, and the Fleet is simultaneously required to defend its sea space against another Fleet, or the Fleet is ordered to support another unit, the Army is considered to have failed to board, and it remains in its previous land province.

d. If an Army's attack (disembarkation) on a land province fails, the A/F remains intact. Any move which the Fleet has ordered will not take place.

e. An Army which is landed after spending one, two or three consecutive moves with a Fleet may be again picked up by the same Fleet on the next move.

f. A Fleet may not simultaneously land one Army and pick up another. All boardings must be made at the beginning of turns.

g. A Fleet which lands an Army on an adjacent land province before making a move may then support that Army into the province as its move. Or, having landed an Army before moving, it may then move elsewhere.

h. If an A/F is annihilated, including by an 'off-the-board' move, both units are removed.

9. Armies may move between Naples and Sicily without convoy.

10. Retreats.

a. Retreats are made by Just's Right Hand Rule. This is: if a participant in the game anticipates that one of his units will be dislodged, he should indicate in advance, in order of



preference, provinces to which the unit should retreat. If none of these is open, or if a dislodged unit has no pre-arranged retreat, the Gamesmaster determines the retreat by moving the unit to the province immediately to the right of the 'front' between the attacker and the defeated unit. If that is closed, then the province to the left. If that is closed, the province next nearest to the right, and so on.

b. A player may not write an 'off the board' retreat order. Any written order for a retreat must be to an existing province. A unit will be forced off the board only if the Gamesmaster finds no other move for it. An 'off the board' move is equivalent to annihilation.

11. During January through April, inclusive, Fleets in the Arctic Ocean, Barents Sea, Arkhangel'sk, Lapland and Iceland may not move nor support, nor may they be attacked or supported by other Fleets, nor may Fleets support attacks on them. These regions are frozen in winter. Armies may move into Arkhangel'sk or Lapland during these months if they are unoccupied, but they cannot attack these areas if they are occupied. Armies already in these provinces may move out overland to adjacent land provinces at any time, including attacks or supports against adjacent land provinces, since the combat would occur in the unfrozen regions.

12. For diplomatic purposes, Ireland should be considered as the 8th province of England (the United Kingdom), although no builds can be made there, nor can the supply centre be counted until it has been occupied. Similarly, Sardinia is the 8th province of Italy.

13. Exchange of provinces.

(This applies only to 'sway' provinces, either supply centres or non-supply centres. A 'sway' province includes those formerly in the homeland of another Great Power, but now controlled by a different Power).

a. Two Great Powers may negotiate to exchange provinces they control at any time. The only restriction is that if a supply centre is involved, and is occupied by a unit of the Power giving up control, that unit must leave the supply centre on the move the exchange becomes effective, or the exchange does not go into effect. The Gamesmaster must be notified in advance of the exchange, and the month for which it is to become effective, which can be up to 3 months in the future. Notices of exchange must be published by the Gamesmaster with the report of the moves for the month in which it becomes effective.

b. An equal number of supply centres must be involved in the exchange, but the number of non-supply centres involved need not be equal.

c. Details of the entire exchange must be sent to the Gamesmaster by both parties, and the entire exchange must be effective at the same time.

14. Armies may pass directly from Egypt to Arabia. In this variant there is no Suez Canal. Arabia and the outer reaches of the Atlantic Ocean are not drawn to scale.

OPTIONAL STARTING RULES FOR ABSTRACTION.

1. The total number of starting units cannot be changed, but the players may alter the number of Fleets and Armies owned by their countries within those totals before the first move of the game. All Great Powers except Turkey may either increase or decrease the number of Fleets or Armies by one unit. An increase in the number of Fleets automatically reduces the number of Armies. Turkey cannot add more than the two Fleets she starts with, but may decrease the total by 2 units and replace them with Armies. See detailed table below for upper and lower limits of Fleets and Armies.

Standard No. of Starting Units in Abstraction.			Optional Building Variation Limits.	
			Max. No. Fleets.	Min. No. Fleets.
England	1A	3F	0A 4F (+1)	2A 2F (-1)
France	2A	2F	1A 3F (+1)	3A 1F (-1)
Italy	2A	2F	1A 3F (+1)	3A 1F (-1)
Turkey	2A	2F	2A 2F (none)	4A 0F (-2)
Germany	3A	1F	2A 2F (+1)	4A 0F (-1)
Austria	3A	1F	2A 2F (+1)	4A 0F (-1)
Russia	3A	2F	2A 3F (+1)	4A 1F (-1)

2. These units may be placed in any province within the homeland of the owning nation, except that all Fleets must be placed in a province bordering on a body of water. They are not restricted to being placed in supply centres. Therefore, their initial placement will be an indication of the intentions of a Great Power in the forthcoming game.

3. Before any units are placed, the players may negotiate among themselves as to how many units of each type should be built, and where they should be placed. When negotiations are over, each player will submit an order for the placement and designation of each unit. This initial move will be called June 1914.

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Summary of additional provinces created or corrected in Abstraction, as compared with Aberration I, the original draft.

- Switzerland to be passable, but not a supply centre.
- A new province (neutral) called Persia, inserted between Caucasus, the Caspian Sea, Armenia and Mesopotamia. Not a supply centre.
- A new Turkish province, called Mesopotamia, bordering on Armenia, Damascus, Palestine, Arabia and Persia, gives Turkey 8 provinces, the same as the other Great Powers. Not a supply centre.

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When applying for a place in the game, which will be called ALBION 70/1V, players should state whether or not they wish to use the optional starting rules. If everyone wants to do so, we will use them; however if one or more players prefer not to do so, the game will be run with regular starting units, i.e. we are not going by a majority vote on the matter. The game fee will be 10/-. Reports will appear in alternate issues of ALBION, although the game fee will cover subscription to the intermediate issues (most players will already be in 69/1 or 69/2 anyway). Right - there's the offer; GET YOUR REQUEST IN QUICKLY! Now, back to Fred's letter. djt\*\*

"I would appreciate it if you would add a footnote to the effect that I would appreciate any comments pro and con about the Abstraction rules from any of the players. One person here has suggested that if Switzerland be made passable, it ought to be protected by a standing army, in consideration of what a 'tough nut' it would have been to crack in either World War. In my 'ultimate' variant, which I call Absurdity (in consideration of the fact that it's probably too big to play) I have added the following rule:- 'Switzerland contains a standing army which cannot move or support, but which must be defeated before the province can be occupied. This Army can be supported in place by other Armies. When defeated, it is annihilated'. This was felt necessary in Absurdity because Switzerland is a supply centre in that variant. Since it is not a supply centre in Abstraction, I did not include this rule. I just wanted to open up the centre of the board for additional maneuvering room. It seemed silly to have one province which could not be entered for any reason whatsoever, when every place else in Europe could be attacked regardless of its geography or historical status. I do have an optional starting rule for Abstraction..... My feeling is that this should be presented to the players as an option and voted upon before starting the game. As you will see, this optional start would make every game different, since there would be a different starting line-up of fighting units in every game. The reason why Turkey is treated differently from the other Powers is that the real Turkish Navy in 1914 was a joke. It is ludicrous to have even one Turkish fleet unit in Diplomacy. If used, the optional starting rule requires an extra long starting period, since a great deal of negotiations will occur before the players commit themselves to locating their units. I do hope we can get a section of Abstraction going in ALBION."

\*\*So do we. Here's the opportunity for getting a 'first' in ALBION, and I hope players are interested enough to apply. Incidentally, sorry the map is a) loose and b) rather cramped. There seemed no other easy way of producing it. djt\*\*

Game Theory Homework Review.

An easy set of problems this time, and the solutions should not take us long. Bit dry, though, these things - problems involving Fred, Jim, Bert etc. are much more interesting.

1.

-2	1	4
1	4	-2

No saddle point, since the maxmin is -2 and the minmax is 1. However, Red 2 is worse for Red than Red 1 in all respects, and we can therefore remove Red 2, leaving a 2x2 game.

		Red	
		1	3
Blue	1	-2	4
	2	1	-2

The solution follows immediately.

Blue plays in the ratio 3:6, or 1:2. Red plays in the ratio 6:0:3, or 2:0:1. Value of the game is 0, which makes a nice change for Red.

Note that if Red plays Red 2 against the mixed Blue strategy, the gain to Blue will be 3 units per play. Hence the urgent need for Red to avoid Red 2 like the plague. I repeat - this sort of quick check is useful to ensure accuracy in the early working.

2.

1	3	6	2
2	5	4	3

The maximum of the row minima is 2 (Blue 2).

The minimum of the column maxima is also 2 (Red 1).

Therefore there is a saddle point at Blue 2 / Red 1, and the value of the game is the payment in that box, i.e. 2.

3.

3	2
1	0
2	5
0	0
1	-4

The maxmin is 2 (Blue 1 or Blue 3). The minmax is 3 (Red 1). Therefore no saddle point. However Blue 1 dominates Blue 2, Blue 4 and Blue 5 and the latter three strategies can be struck off, leaving a 2x2 again. Kind, ain't it?

		Red	
		1	2
Blue	1	3	2
	3	2	5

Blue plays in ratio 3:0:1:0:0. Red plays in the ratio 3:1.  
Value of the game is  $2\frac{3}{4}$ .

Check:- If Blue plays Blue 2 against the Red mixed strategy, he wins only  $\frac{3}{4}$ . If he plays Blue 4 he wins nothing. If he plays Blue 5 he actually loses  $\frac{1}{4}$ . Hence the obvious need for him to drop these poor strategies, revealed by dominance.

4.

0	3
2	1
0	3
1	0
4	1
0	3

Maxmin is 1 (Blue 2 and Blue 5). Minmax is 3 (Red 2). Therefore no saddle point. However Blue 1, Blue 3 and Blue 6 are all equal, so we'll drop the last two (any two would do). Also Blue 5 dominates Blue 4 and Blue 2, so Blue 2 and Blue 4 can go. We are left with a 2x2 again.

		Red	
		1	2
Blue	1	0	3
	5	4	1

Blue plays in the ratio 1:0:0:0:1:0, or 0:0:1:0:1:0, or even 0:0:0:0:1:1. These alternative solutions arise since Blue has three equal strategies, and it doesn't matter which of them he includes. Red plays in the ratio 2:4 (1:2). The value of the game is 2.

Check:- Blue 2 against Red mixture means Blue wins only  $1\frac{1}{2}$ . Blue 4 against Red mixture wins him  $\frac{1}{2}$  only. Thus the need for Blue to avoid these strategies is clear.

Now for the next section.

#### GAME THEORY (cont).

#### Part 8. 2xm games which won't reduce to 2x2.

Last time we showed that some 2xm (or mx2) games can be reduced to 2x2, easy solution, games, by considering equality or dominance among the strategies.

You should know me well enough by now to guess that this doesn't happen all the time, and that sooner or later we are going to meet a game which obstinately refuses to reduce to a 2x2, whatever we do to try to reduce it.

You would be quite right, and it is sooner, not later. Look at the following game, for instance, in which Red has three strategies and Blue two. You will recognise it as question 1 of the homework with a couple of apparently minor changes.

Example 14.

		Red		
		1	2	3
Blue	1	3	1	4
	2	1	4	0

You can see that there are no equal strategies. Nor are there any strategies which we can drop out of the matrix by considering dominance. The question is - what do we do now? Let's become philosophic for a moment.

It might have surprised you that the 2xm games we have considered so far have reduced to 2x2; isn't it possible, you might ask, to have a game which reduces to a 2x1? Or a 3x2, with all strategies 'active' for each player? Or some other form in which the best strategies for the players are unequal in number? Well, the mathematics behind this is pretty ghastly, and I won't bore you with it, but there is an important rule here:-

### IMPORTANT RULE NUMBER THREE.

In all games the number of strategies available to each participant in their 'best' solutions are always equal. In this statement, we avoid for the time being the case when a player can combine alternative solutions when he has equal strategies in the matrix. However, equality apart, the principle remains the same.

Turning back to the 2xm games, therefore, we see (without proof, but what do you expect??) that a 2xm game either reduces to a saddle point solution (1x1, really) or to a 2x2 solution. Hence, although it isn't obvious, there must be a Red strategy in the above example which is, in fact, dominated. Now it isn't dominated by another single strategy, so it must be dominated by a suitable mixture of the other two.

So the solution is, in principle, easy. All we have to do is to find a 2x2 game within the above 2x3 whose solution 'fits' the 2x3 game we are considering. Although this sounds easy, the practice may be tedious. Luckily we can be inspired at times, and we will see sometime in the future that this inspiration can assist in reducing the labour.

MOMENTARY DIGRESSION. Has it ever struck you that the root of the word 'inspire', 'inspiration' etc. must be the same as the root of Spiro??? Food for thought here, I'm sure.

Back to the article, and a bit more jargon. In the game above, there are really three  $2 \times 2$  'sub-games'. The first includes Red 1 and Red 2 against the Blue strategies, the second Red 1 and Red 3, the third Red 2 and Red 3. The solution of one of these sub-games is also the solution of the original game, and it is up to us to find which one, and what solution.

I might tell you how to find the number of sub-games in a  $2 \times n$  game one day. For the moment, let's announce that there are 3 sub-games in a  $2 \times 3$ , 6 in a  $2 \times 4$ , 10 in a  $2 \times 5$ , 15 in a  $2 \times 6$ , etc. Someone should surely spot the pattern here. Anyway, whether you know it or not, it is clear that to ferret out the sub-games from a  $2 \times 31$ , say, is not going to be a nice procedure, and inspiration will be needed if we ever get to that stage.

In the example above, let's list the sub-games that appear.

<u>Sub-game 1.</u>			<u>Sub-game 2.</u>			<u>Sub-game 3.</u>														
Red			Red			Red														
1      2			1      3			2      3														
Blue	1	<table border="1"><tr><td>3</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>4</td></tr></table>	3	1	1	4	Blue	1	<table border="1"><tr><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>0</td></tr></table>	3	4	1	0	Blue	1	<table border="1"><tr><td>1</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>0</td></tr></table>	1	4	4	0
	3	1																		
1	4																			
3	4																			
1	0																			
1	4																			
4	0																			
2	<table border="1"><tr><td>1</td><td>4</td></tr></table>	1	4	2	<table border="1"><tr><td>1</td><td>0</td></tr></table>	1	0	2	<table border="1"><tr><td>4</td><td>0</td></tr></table>	4	0									
1	4																			
1	0																			
4	0																			

One of these provides the solution of the original game, so we must solve each one in turn and see how it fits the original.

Sub-game 1. Blue strategy 3:2. Red strategy 3:2.  
Value 2.1 (sorry about the decimal).

Now, the crux - does this 'fit' the original game? Let's see what happens if Blue plays his 3:2 mixture against the absent Red strategy (Red 3). In this case Blue would win 2.2, rather than 2.1, and this is better than he would get out of the sub-game. In other words Red would be well advised to avoid Red 3 since it seems to be dominated, in some curious way (perhaps a curious-yellow way) by his other available strategies. It looks like this is a solution of the original game, since this first sub-game gives Red the best results.

Just to confirm this, however, and set your mind at rest, we will solve the other two sub-games and see what happens.

Sub-game 2. Saddle point solution at Blue 1 / Red 1.  
Value 3.

Red should obviously avoid this game. Anyway, there isn't



a saddle point in the original game, and it would be asking a bit much to produce a  $2 \times 2$  sub-game with a saddle point which solves the original. Think about it - saddle points don't just grow, you know.

Sub-game 3. Blue strategy 4:3. Red strategy 4:3.  
Value 2 and two-sevenths. 2.285..... if you want the decimals.

Let's try this solution against the missing Red strategy, Red 1. We see that Blue's winnings would drop slightly to 2 and one-seventh. Or 2.142..... Red would therefore be very pleased if he could play Red 1 against the mixture Blue works out from sub-game 3. For the same reason, Blue won't want to play the sub-game 3 solution.

Isn't it now obvious that sub-game 1 solves the original game? I hope so, since this is an important principle, which you will have to be able to operate with facility later on, when dealing with more complicated games.

Here, therefore, is the solution.

Blue plays in ratio 3:2.

Red plays in ratio 3:2:0.

Value of the game is 2.1 (no tenths on this typewriter).

Summary of  $2 \times n$  game solution.

1. Check for a saddle point first.
2. If no saddle point, try to reduce the game to  $2 \times 2$  by equality or dominance. If the game does reduce, you can feel pleased about it, particularly if the original happens to be  $2 \times 36$ .
3. If the game persists in remaining larger than  $2 \times 2$ , split it into  $2 \times 2$  sub-games and solve each one individually. If you are lucky, you may pick the right one first, as I did. The solution of a particular sub-game is also the solution of the original IF the player with the two strategies in the original does better against the opposing strategies that don't appear in the sub-game than he does against those that do.

Let's clarify this last rule, at the risk of repetition. In the  $2 \times 2$  non-saddle-point games, we found that the player using the best mixed strategy would win the same amount against either of the opposing strategies. In the  $2 \times n$  game, one player still wins the same amount against either of the two opposing strategies that appear in the best mixture of the opponent, but he will win more against the opponent's remaining strategies (i.e. the ones the opponent would be crazy to use, under this consideration).

Hope this is clear. We will close at this point, and use the next issue to give you examples of the application of this new technique. This means no homework.

RAH! RAH! RAH! RAH! UP WITH TEACHER!!

Prof. Erasmus Thing.

ALBION Trades and Subscribers List - Addenda and Corrigenda.

Symbole as issue 10, and numbering refers also.  
Please correct/add as follows:-

2. John Munro (L). Delete from lists.
19. Eric Slack (S). Subscription now includes issue 24.  
Also has 10d surplus.
20. Sheila Minion (S). Subscription now includes issue 25.  
Also has 6d surplus.
23. Lawrence M. Fong, 704 Alice Street, Oakland, California  
94607, U.S.A. (S). New subscriber, and thereby hangs  
a tale, as recounted below.

IT COULD ONLY HAPPEN IN ENGLAND Part 2.

You will see from the above that we have a new subscriber in Larry Fong. He wrote a few weeks ago asking if I could trade with him (he edits a magazine, born out of the remnant of two others, which I think is called BERZERKELEY BARK - hope that's right, Larry). Now ALBION cannot take on any more trades at present, due to the high postage cost of sending issues to the U.S.A., and I had to write to Larry to advise him of this. Being an eminently sensible person, he decided to subscribe to ALBION until such time as trade is possible, thereby ensuring he doesn't miss any of the pearls of wisdom appearing with such remarkable regularity in these pages.

All right - I'll get to the point. Larry sent me a dollar bill as payment for the subscription, so I duly presented myself at District Bank Limited, Wilmslow Branch, clutching the mazuma, in the hopes of seeing it transformed into cash I could ~~use~~ ~~spend~~ ~~on~~ my starving child and fourteen wives.

At the risk of emulating my dear friend Prof. Erasmus Thing, I must trouble you with some simple arithmetic. The current rate of exchange (2.40 of their dollars for 1 of our £s), this means that 1 cent (US) is worth one penny (GB); it doesn't take long to realise that 1 dollar should be worth 100 pence, or 8/4d. With me so far?

I explained my international currency dealings to the smooth, silver-voiced high financier across the counter. He bowed fourteen times and disappeared. After what might be called a pregnant pause, he reappeared and handed me a little piece of paper on which appeared the information that HM treasury were about to give me 8/3d. Ah well, thought I, a true patriotic Englishman, with the right stuff coursing through his veins, and a spot of blood besides, would not hesitate to donate 1d to the Government. After all, they take nothing from us at all - really, when you think about it.

I therefore handed back the piece of paper with a flourish and a beaming smile. Only then did the true extent of the

villainy emerge. Pushed across the counter to me were various coins, which I took into a corner to study (this decimal business is real hard on a mathematics teacher). Imagine my horror, gentle reader (and horror also) when I found the total sum to be 7/3d. Yes, this isn't an error - 7 shillings and 3 pence.

By this time a large queue had formed. My agile eye flitted over the salary slips that were to be paid in by the customers following, with these results:-

Nurse behind me. One month's salary. £18-10-0d.

Policeman behind her. One month's salary. £21-5-0d.

Docker in Savile Row suit, leading a dalmatian on a gold chain, with lace at the cuffs (the dalmatian) and a pearl ear-ring threaded through his nose (the docker). One week's salary. £81-15-0d.

Teacher in standard uniform (20-year-old sports jacket, with a total of fifty three leather patches, baggy trousers, totally chalk-encrusted from head to foot). One month's salary. £31-12-0d.

Scaffolder's knee-wrencher's union convener, executive member and grade two mud-slinger. One month's salary. Nil. Plus donation from union for services rendered. £93-15-6d.

I elbowed my way through the crowd, and presented myself once more at the counter. Mr. smooth popped up from his cheese sandwich, and favoured me with a sickly smile, no doubt thinking that this customer really deserved what he would get. I pointed out in the gentlest of tones that a teeny mistake had been made, and would he please get me the extra 1/-.

"Ah!", quoth he; (yes, we still quoth over here); "That's the commission."

My mouth dropped open. He misinterpreted my expression as one of utter incomprehension.

"You pay us commission for changing the money", he explained, as a teacher to a particularly backward child.

I was beyond words. A commission for changing the money is fair enough, I suppose, but to charge 1/- in 8/3d was, I thought, going a bit too far. My mind reeled with the thought that if I had brought in 100 dollars, I would now owe the bank money.

There was only one solution. Leaning casually over the counter, I grabbed the dollar bill from its resting place, threw the 7/3d onto the counter, turned and fled, causing untold damage to the dalmatian and the convener.

So, does anyone want a dollar bill? Offers over 7/3d please! If no-one buys it, I will just have to spend it myself in the summer in the rightful country, and \*\*\*\*\* to the treasury.

Seriously - isn't this a bit much? Actually, I may be wrong, and this may be standard practice all over the world, but 12% is, to my mind, about 10% too much. No wonder we're rich.

ALBION Game Review Number Two.

NORMANDY.

Published by:- Strategy and Tactics Magazine,  
Poultron Press,  
Box 4267,  
Long Island City,  
New York 11104, U.S.A.

Price - 5 dollars, plus postage.

Background.

This is another Test Series game, and concerns the vital first days of the Normandy landings, 1944. Units are at a regimental level, and the idea of the game is to recreate the landings and go on until about D plus 7.

Presentation.

As in the case of Tactical Game 3 (reviewed in ALBION 10), this department is below the average we have come to expect (for only a couple of dollars more) from Avalon Hill. The mapboard is a single sheet of hexagon paper, delivered in a mailing tube (uncreased, I should add). The map is in single colour, and again splash contours are used for various types of terrain. Colouring these features with felt pens improves things considerably.

The unit counters. In my copy the German counters are blue and the allied counters red, which of course contradicts all references to them in the rules. However this is a minor error. The allied counters are, as with Tactical Game 3, wafer thin; however I am getting quite used to handling them now, and find this aspect rather less objectionable than at first. These thin counters are of some plastic material. The German counters are something of a compromise between the thin counters and the normal Avalon Hill size, and are of card. These, too, are quite easy, though unfamiliar, to handle. What I really object to about the unit counters is the careless way in which they have been cut from the main sheet. The poor bloke who does this obviously gets rather fed up of cutting out counters all day, and seems incapable of cutting anything approaching a square. It strikes me they have put the company moron on this job. The result is untidy stacking and often difficulty in deciphering the combat factors etc. Totally displeasing to the eye.

Now there is no need for this at all. Poultron Press kindly sent me a strip of counters for Tactical Game 3 (which had been omitted from the set they sent), and there was no difficulty whatsoever in cutting these to the required size and shape. I'm sure they could supply the counters in strips, and no purchaser would object to having to cut the things himself. After all, these games are in 'kit' form, and it seems logical to supply strips of counters in this regard.

The rules.

These are printed on quarto paper, rather than being in book form. There are considerably less errors in these than with Tactical Game 3, and the rules are quite easy to read and sort out. It only took us about 20 minutes to set up for the first game.

As far as we can determine, there is only one source of confusion in the rules (this concerns the number of glider regiments which may be landed on turn one - in one place it says two and in another three). On the whole I would rate them highly for clarity and comprehension.

The play.

Very good indeed. Although the basic rules are far from the complexity of 1914 etc., much thought is required in play. Supply lines play a very important, and the new system of movement (two impulses per turn for each side) makes defending the supply line a tough job for the allies. Or it would be a tough job if the Germans had more units; see below. Combat is realistic: the results table is quite remarkable, with the slight possibility of the attacker going into retreat after a 6-1 attack! This, to us, reflects very well the conditions in the bocage and on the beaches, where the defender was so favoured by the terrain. To break out from the beaches against a strong German force in defence is quite a job.

Three German orders-of-battle are presented. The first is the actual oob present; in this the German has few units, and correspondingly less chance of winning. We think the German is likely to lose the game unless he plays with one of the larger orders-of-battle. More about this later. The 'increased Effort' oob would have been possible had the Germans realised the nature of the invasion (i.e. had realised it was not a feint). Clearly this gives the German more chance of winning. The 'All Out Effort' oob estimates the maximum force the Germans could have put into the area in the first few days, presumably by denuding Pas de Calais and elsewhere. We have so far only played the original oob.

Play balance seems quite reasonable with the original oob, but we think the Allies have the edge.

Only one thing strikes me - the same combat results table applies for all combat; we think that a special results table should be used for the actual beaches, providing the Germans used the original oob. At present it seems rather easy to get ashore, particularly since each beach-head square can call on 40 factors of naval gunnery (though the latter cannot be applied to attacks remote from the beach, funnily enough). Of course, we have only played two games, and it is perhaps too early to start criticising the design. As far as events so far have shown, the design is very good anyway.

There are, therefore, only minor criticisms of the rules, and the play makes them rather unimportant. After all, this game is one which could become the most complex of all, if we included various ranges and strengths of naval gunfire, pre-invasion bombing of the beaches, consideration of the weather governing the landings etc. etc. Under these circumstances, which could lead to conflicts on the actual conditions, we think that the design covers the action very well, and that the game is very enjoyable to play.

## Conclusions

Physical quality and value for money (in physical terms only) is below average. I would expect to pay a dollar or so less for the actual material received, even considering the high prices of everything in America. Rules clear and almost totally lacking in contradiction, which is more than one can say about the average AH product nowadays. A book would be more convenient than pieces of paper, but that's minor.

Unit counters cut in the most careless manner possible; get this one sorted out, Poultron Press!

Play excellent. Playing time perhaps 3-4 hours (and this means what it says - I seem to recall that 1914 can be played in 4 hours or so, according to AH). Set-up time minimal - perhaps 15 minutes.

Realism appropriate to a game of the concept - i.e. relatively simple in comparison with, say, 1914. This could be the most complex game ever if the designer had wanted it that way. It would have probably been unplayable in those conditions. We think a nice balance has been obtained.

Well worth getting, if you don't mind paying a bit extra for the physical side than you should do, being compensated by good play.



The pages of this report will again be circulated to all the members of AHIKS British region, as before, and some copies will also be sent to the USA for distribution to interested parties. In doing this, we take pity on those who, in all other respects models of intelligent citizenship, fail to reach the highest standards attainable in their refusal to subscribe to ALBION.

We have said one or two cruel things about Poultron Press in these pages recently. We have particularly criticised their apparent inability to perform the simple courtesy of replying to letters, their delay in mailing game orders etc. These criticisms are still, for some members of the British Region, perfectly valid; I know of three people, in addition to myself, who have written to Poultron Press, in some cases enclosing cash. These three people have still not had any reply, as far as I am aware, despite the fact that their letters were mailed some months ago. However, I think things are looking up.

I wrote at the beginning of January to Poultron Press (again) asking, amongst other things, what had become of the S&T issue which they had promised. I received a reply, almost by return of post! Enclosed was a copy of the latest S&T (as it happens, my own copy had arrived in the interim period, so I now have two; it seems that their mailing department is at fault for these delays). The letter assured me that my questions and orders had been dealt with (they had) and that the situation regarding the other correspondents from England was being looked into.

After all the harsh things I had said, it came as a pleasant surprise to receive such a letter, which promised improvements for the future and an immediate settlement of outstanding problems. The writer? None other than Edi Birsan, who amongst other things is an ardent Diplomacy player, and who is Managing Editor of Strategy and Tactics.

I would like to take the opportunity of thanking Edi in these pages for his letter and attention. We are assured that things will go smoothly in future. I would strongly advise anyone who wishes to write to S&T to address the envelope for the attention of Edi Birsan - that way it will get attention and action.

The February issue of the AHIKS British Regional bulletin will carry a report on the latest S&T issue, plus details of the cost of subscriptions etc.

xx

MISCELLANY.

DIPLOMANIA has arrived. I now have issues 1-26 or so, and will have no trouble in finding reading matter for the next few days. There will be a report on the 'Miller stable' magazines in the next issue of ALBION.

Apologies to Fred Davies. The Abstraction map printed off all right, except that Fred's name got lost off the credits at the south-west corner. Sorry, Fred - if I had included your name, the Barents Sea would have dropped off the other side.

The ALBION games have been allocated Boardman numbers (the universal Diplomacy code for recording games). ALBION 69/1 is 1969BG, and ALBION 69/2 is 1969CF. For future orders I will accept either coding.

Rod Walker, in NUMENOR 57, says that ALBION games are restricted to English players. In part only, Rod! The two current games are all-British, but the ill-fated 69/3 was to have been all-comers, and we hope to have an all-comers 'regular' game starting soon. Announcement in a future issue.

John McCallum mind-reads! See after the game reports.

REPORT.

ALBION 69/1.  
Winter 1905 Builds:-

(1969BG).

Austria builds ..... A(Vie).

REPORT.

ALBION 69/1.  
Spring 1906 orders:-

(1969BG).

Austria (Nethercot);	A(Tri) S A(Ven). <u>A(Ven) S Turkish F(Apu).</u> A(Boh) S A(Tyr). <u>A(Vie)-Gal.</u>	A(Tyr) S A(Ven).   
England (Munro);	No orders received.	<u>A(Lpl) stands.</u>
France (Watson);	F(NTH) stands. A(Yor)-Lpl. A(Ruh) S German A(Mun). <u>F(Tus)-Rom.</u> <u>F(IOUS)-AES.</u>	F(Edi) S F(NTH). F(NAO) S A(Yor)-Lpl.  <u>A(Pie)-Ven.</u>
Germany (Newcombe);	<u>F(Den)-Swe.</u> A(Sil)-War. A(Mun) stands.	F(BAL) S F(Den)-Swe. A(Pru) S A(Sil)-War.
Italy (Robertson);	A(Nap)-Apu. <u>F(Tun)-IOS.</u>	F(ADS) S A(Nap)-Apu.
Russia (Hancock);	F(NWG) stands. F(GoB) S A(Swe). A(StP) S F(Nor). <u>A(Gal) S A(War).</u>	F(Nor) S F(NWG). <u>A(Swe) S F(Nor).</u> <u>A(War) stands.</u>
Turkey (Wood);	F(Apu)-IOS. A(Gre) S A(Alb). F(AES) S F(Apu)-IOS.	A(Alb) S A(Gre). A(Bul) S A(Gre).

Retreats:- The English A(Lpl) retreats to Wal (GM movement).  
The Russian A(War) is displaced and can retreat to Ukr, Mos or Liv.  
The French F(IOUS) is displaced and can retreat to EMS, Nap or TYS.

Notation: S=supports. Underlined moves fail.

Deadline for Autumn 1906 orders:-

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 5th 1970.

These orders should also include orders for the two retreats; orders for other countries can be made giving alternatives depending on the two retreats. Alternatively players can discover the direction of retreats by diplomatic communication. HOWEVER if Russia and France let me have their retreats in return of post, I will circulate this information to the other players and obviate the need for dependent orders.



A brief word on the retreats situation. When there are a number of retreats, I will issue an interim report on them in the same form as currently used for builds. However, in cases where the retreats are few, I think it would be a reasonable request to ask for dependent orders, in order not to put too big a gap between deadlines. If anyone objects violently to this, then the interim report system will be adopted in all cases; otherwise you must leave the matter to my judgement, such as it is. I would prefer that the two players involved should send me their retreats between deadlines, so that this information can be circulated (or they can even do the circulation themselves!). However they might not have time - let's see how it goes this time, eh?

69/1 Press Release.

TURKEY.

Astounding news! Yesterday a coup d'etat took place and Sultan-A has been deposed. A new Government under King Reshadieh has been set up. Rumours in the capital say that he is to make sweeping changes in the country. How this will affect the present foreign policy of this country no-one is yet certain, and at any minute we, here in the NANA, expect to be removed for expressing our opinions.

What has happened to our Beloved Leader Sultan-A? It is said that he has emigrated to England to join in a game called 69/1 where a Turkish ruler named Sultan-A has just been deposed, who in fact travelled to England to take part .....well, we know the rest. Let it be said that your independent newspaper kept to its opinions through thick and through thin, and at the moment I can hear troops coming to close up the paper and... eeeeeeeeeeeeeeyyyyoocowwwwwwwwwwwww.....

This is your new Turkish newspaper TRASH. We intend to bring you the facts exactly as they happen, bringing a new era of journalism to your magnificent capital. No democratic balderdash will be tolerated and only the news pertaining to your totalitarian State will be published. Our wise and joyful King Reshadieh is expected to announce sweeping changes within the next few weeks; so everybody in Turkey should catch up on their taxes and TV licences before our new Minister for Monetary Affairs, Basil Rupee, catches up with you.

You have been warned! King Reshadieh wishes you a thousand welcomes, each costing 10,000 rupees (as you see, we are changing the currency); this money will be used to equip our new armies.

Beware of the Ides of March (or is it the day after?).

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An amazing thing - this is the only press release for 69/1 this time. Looking at the moves above, it's perhaps not surprising that certain countries don't wish to express their plans on paper for all to see..... Ah well, it makes a nice change.

REPORT.

ALBION 69/2.  
Winter 1901 Builds.

(1969CF).

Austria builds ..... A(Vie).  
England builds ..... F(Lon).  
France builds ..... F(Bre), A(Par).  
Germany builds ..... F(Kie), F(Ber).  
Italy builds ..... F(Nap).  
Russia builds ..... A(Sev), F(StP-NC).  
Turkey builds ..... A(Con), F(Smy).

REPORT.

ALBION 69/2.

Spring 1902 orders.

Austria (Wood);	A(Vie)-Gal.	F(Tri)-Alb.
	<u>A(Ser) S F(Tri)-Alb.</u>	A(Bud) S A(Ser).
England (Hancock);	F(Nor) stands.	F(NWG) S F(Nor).
	F(Lon)-NTH.	A(Yor)-Lon.
France (Evans);	A(Par)-Gas.	A(Bel) stands.
	A(Pic) S A(Bel).	F(Por)-MAO.
	F(Bre)-ENC.	
Germany (Stuart);	A(Hol) stands.	A(Mun) stands.
	F(Den)-Ska.	F(Ber)-Kie.
	F(Kie)-Hel.	
Italy (Watson);	A(Ven)-Tyr.	F(LOS)-EMS.
	F(Nap)-IOS.	A(Tun) stands.
Russia (Robertson);	<u>F(StP-NC)-Nor.</u>	<u>A(Sev)-Rum.</u>
	A(Swe) S F(StP-NC)-Nor.	
	F(GoB) S A(Swe).	<u>F(Rum)-BLA.</u>
	<u>A(Ukr) S A(Sev)-Rum.</u>	
Turkey (Thomas);	<u>A(Bul)-Ser.</u>	A(Gre) S A(Bul)-Ser.
	F(Smy) stands.	<u>A(Con)-Bul.</u>
	<u>F(BLA)-Con.</u>	

Retreats:- none.

Note that the Russian order A(Ukr) S A(Sev)-Rum is underlined since it is an illegal order, not because of failure of the order. Since the Russian move F(Rum)-BLA failed, the attack on Rum with support would have displaced a unit of the same nationality as that of the attacker; hence the attack fails and the support order is illegal. Had the move into the Black Sea worked, then, of course, the support into the (vacant) Rum would have been both legal and effective.

Deadline for Autumn 1902 orders:-

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 5th 1970.

From the German Press.

From a statement made by Kaiser Bob.

The French were rather surprised at the load of codswallop coming from 'the man with the telephone' in regard to our wonderful Burgandy wines. We think the wine is too strong for the Kaiser, in which case we suggest the Kaiser should stick to his appetizer.....

The Austro-Hungarian Government wishes it to be known that a state of war exists between the afore-mentioned and the Russo-Turkish aggressors. News has filtered through that the Russian Bear was the chief instrument in architecting the coming conflict. The Italian Government has agreed, to a limited degree, to assist us in defending our homeland against the attacking hordes. It is hoped that neither France nor Germany will partake in the forthcoming struggle by joining the Russo-Turkish attack.

Here in Vienna, nuclear cross-bows, patented by Bernie the Bolt himself, are being issued to the peasants. Unfortunately they don't know one end of a nuclear cross-bow from another.

Do you?

Our Leader, Count Molochite (hard 'ch' please) is at present working on his favourite hobby - inventions. However he never invents useful articles; only anti-gravity hour-glass egg timers, left-handed screwdrivers, nuclear pea-shooters etc. It is rumoured that he has produced an atomic single-seater rowing-boat, capable of rowing around the world 8 times without re-fuelling or entering port (sort of endurance test for the sailor). Its intended application is a little obscure, and if anyone has any ideas, please write to the ALBION editor - he'll listen.

This completes the press reports, with no news from Turkey or England. I'm often in a quandary concerning the length of press releases. Lengthy statements mean long hours at the typewriter, with the possibility of a delay in publication. Short reports, or nothing at all, overcomes this problem, but I don't want to force players to this sort of situation, since they should be free to write anything they like, within reason.

So - let it be known that we of ALBION will print releases of any length; however, when writing your reports, don't get carried away - a short report is often more effective than one that is 'padded'.

Interesting point here - in the early DIPLOMANIA games, Don Miller restricted press releases to two lines. Later he allowed unlimited press, but charged the player extra for the privilege, on the grounds (and very logical and right, too) that long press releases mean more stencils, and hence more expenditure per issue. Even later still, the restriction was lifted completely (I think), but by that time players had got used to the idea of a short statement anyway.

Now, we print enough rubbish in ALBION (that written by the editor falls uniformly into this category, for a start) and hence we already could be said to use more stencils than is perhaps strictly necessary. Therefore the above argument doesn't apply here. But the spirit does we are a Diplomacy magazine, just as DIPLOMANIA.

Think about it.

Concerning deadlines. As the game progresses (69/1, that is), players are sending in orders closer and closer to the deadline each time. Of course, they are right to wait until the actual date itself; not only would there be no point in a deadline date otherwise, but by holding back until the last minute, players can ensure that they hear as much as possible from other countries before writing their final orders.

HOWEVER, since Spring 1903, at least one player has sent in moves one day later than the deadline for each season. Up to now we have been tolerant of this situation, since we don't want to ruin the game by trying to force the pace. However players are hereby warned that final typing of the issue takes place the day after the deadline, if not the actual day itself, and hence no more than 24 hours grace can be expected for late orders. Don't forget that you are allowed to phone your orders in, if you think they won't arrive in time via our wonderful mailing system. The number is 061-973-4367, just in case anyone has forgotten. I will accept telephoned orders until the time of typing the game report, not after, and since this is a variable factor, the best way is to ensure your orders drop through the letter-box the day of the deadline itself, unless events don't allow this.

Sorry to gripe - but then you would complain if ALBION started to reach you a week after the deadline.....

Now to other matters.

#### JOHN MCCALLUM MINDREADS!

Earlier in this issue I made a comment on the victory criterion to the effect that I wondered just how many game results would have been different if the game had been run in a different magazine, with victory criteria different. John McCallum must have occult powers - see a recent letter.

From John McCallum, P.O.Box 52, Ralston, Alberta, Canada.

"As to the victory condition and whether there is ever a difficulty in deciding the winner. It would be rare as between one individual being declared the winner and another being named the winner under a different criterion. What does happen with fair frequency is that one criterion will call the game a draw while another would assign a winner. To take the game that I was in, which I mentioned last time, as an example. Reinsel, playing France, and I, playing England were allied against Smythe, playing Turkey, and Wells, playing Italy. Reinsel and I were more or less equal with half the forces on the board between us. Smythe had the dominant position in the east with Wells' Italy as a hanger-on.

As you have doubtless learned in the course of your voluminous Dippy correspondence, Reinsel is a somewhat touchy character who has contrived to become involved in innumerable feuds. His feud with Wells was just hotting up at that time and Wells deliberately played a strong naval defence against Reinsel's fleets in the Med., while his ally Smythe was eating Italy from behind. (I was engaged mostly in north Europe where Smythe and I fought, with no gain to either, along the line that stretches from the Gulf of Finland to Switzerland). Eventually, of course, Smythe took over all of Italy, by which time he had 17 forces. sTab then had a simple majority Victory Criterion, and I was sure that I would have to warn Reinsel to be cautious and not to lose a piece, as Reinsel is somewhat impetuous. In the event, he had to warn me. The skirmishing on the Galician line had by that time ceased as both Smythe and I had realised that no successful advance was possible there, and we were defending only. I had brought a fleet or two down into the Med to bolster Reinsel.

There was an opportunity where we did have a chance of making an advance in the naval sphere in the Med. It wouldn't immediately net us a supply centre but would make for improved position on following moves. I urged this on Reinsel but, as he correctly informed me, the move in question could conceivably, if Smythe played properly, have cost us a fleet which could be annihilated having no room for retreat. This wouldn't have mattered under other circumstances, for instance before Wells was completely absorbed by his ally; we would then have lost the force and rebuilt for it on the following build move. But, in the circumstances that actually held, Smythe would have had 17 forces and we, between us, only 16. Only momentarily, it is true, as we could rebuild on the next move, but that moment would have been fatal to us with a majority rule, and Smythe would have been declared the winner.

As a result we had to settle for a less hopeful strategy and play safe. And the game eventually went to a draw. Under an 18 rule, of course, we would have opted for the more

aggressive strategy and taken our chances on the loss which would then, of course, have not been fatal. There have been several other games similar to this one, where the outcome depended on the Victory Criterion used. All, however, like this one - a question of a win or a draw, not a question of a win for A as opposed to a win for B."

Well, that certainly gives us a fine example of the issue involved. Thanks, John, for letting me have these details. Funny thing - over here we have never seen more than about 8 units of one country on the board at the same time yet. As I look up at the pin-boards of the Diplomacy games hanging around the walls of my sanctum, I wonder whether I will have enough pins to cope, when players start getting knocked out of the games.

Now another letter, from Bernie Ackerman, Box 6, Daggafontein, Transvaal, South Africa. You will remember that his first letter appeared in issue 9.

"Many thanks for your two letters. It was very considerate of you to send a second letter and sample ALBION. My interest in, and experience of, Diplomacy, is of rather recent origin, but I think ALBION is a fine example of the specie: Dip-zine. Two or three \*\*\*\*\* (name omitted by the editor) have come my way and I think your magazine is better. Your paper and printing is clean and much easier to read, and neither did I like the anti-US Government stuff he writes. (That gives readers a clue as to the omitted name above - djt). Give me your humour any day.

I am interested in playing in an ALBION game, but there are several problems. Not really in the Hyperspace game; I like Diplomacy because it approximates the real-life international scene. Hyperspace does not add to this realism. Maybe one day when/if the regular game becomes boring. I see you may run a regular game instead but I've so many irons in the fire that to find the time is the difficulty. Can you in the meantime let me know what the game fee will be? The issues of ALBION in which the moves appear will have to come via air-mail (intermediate ones, sea mail); what will this cost me per 'zine? Deadlines will have to be not less than 3-4 weeks apart. The main point is of course the cost of postage. I have a special arrangement with respect to QAC which won't work with the amount of propaganda 69/1 seems to call for. Can you also say what an ordinary sub to ALBION will be, sea-mail?

The article in ALBION on Games Theory is extremely interesting but also very baffling. Am I just dumb? My opinion of my intelligence has taken a rude knock since taking an interest in adult games. What is a saddle-point?

So that's about enough for now. You can put me down as interested in a regular Diplomacy game, providing the money question is solved. Also if the other players do not mind the slower game and increased cost of writing to me."



Get the idea? Think about it.....

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CONTAINED

EDINBURGH

ANGUS MCGAVIN  
HIGHLAND FLING

GERMANY RELAXES  
IN THE FRIENDLY  
SHADE OF THEIR  
FRENCH ALLIES

PIEDMONT

VENICE

TUSCANY ADRIATICS

APULIA

ITALY LURES  
AUSTRIA TO  
DESTRUCTION

TURKISH PLANS  
FALL FLAT

